



International Association of Structural Integrators

The Professional Association for Structural Integration

P.O. Box 8664, Missoula, MT 59807 USA

September 4, 2006

Representative Edward Gaffney
Chair, Health Policy Committee
Michigan House of Representatives

RE: House Bill 5218 - Massage Therapy Licensing Bill

Dear Representative Gaffney:

It has come to my attention that your committee will be considering testimony regarding HB 5218 on Tuesday morning, September 5th. I would like to petition the committee to delay passing this bill on for a vote until there has been further attention given to the exemptions in the bill.

Several practices have been exempted, as they are not forms of massage, and it would not be appropriate for them to be governed by a massage therapy board. There is another exemption that needs to be in place before the bill goes to a vote. That exemption would be for Structural Integration.

I am writing to you as a Board member of the International Association of Structural Integrators (IASI), the professional organization for Structural Integrators. In my home state of Georgia, the exemption that was included in the newly enacted massage licensure bill is as follows:

Exemption: A person who uses touch and movement education to effect change in the structure of the body while engaged in the practice of structural integration, provided that he or she is a member of, or whose training would qualify for membership in, the International Association of Structural Integrators and provided that his or her services are not designated or implied to be massage or massage therapy;

Following is the definition of Structural Integration:

SI Definition: Structural Integration is a somatic practice utilizing fascial manipulation, awareness, and movement education. It is practiced in an organized series of sessions and individual sessions within a framework designed to restore postural balance and functional ease by aligning and integrating the body in gravity. Structural Integration is based on the work of Dr. Ida P. Rolf. It is practiced by persons trained in Structural Integration at trainings, schools and institutions in accordance with the standards established by the International Association of Structural Integrators.

Our Association currently accepts members based on minimum training requirements, which include a total of 650 hours of Structural Integration training. We have verified which schools meet this minimum requirement, and accept graduates from those schools. We are developing a certification exam which will be NCCA and ANSI approved. This will be in place in late 2007. This will replace the current method of determining qualifications based on school attendance.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Libby Eason

Toll free: 1-877-The-IASI (843-4274)

E-mail: info@theiasi.org

Web Site: [http:// www.theiasi.org](http://www.theiasi.org)

Kathleen L. Strauch, J.D.
Certified Advanced Rolfer
25901 W. 10 Mile Rd. #108
Southfield, Michigan 48034
248 354-3484
September 4, 2006

House Standing Committee on Health

It has come to my attention that you are having a meeting tomorrow regarding possible amendments to the health code which would regulate the practice of massage and bodywork and include the practice of structural integration within a broad definition of massage. As an attorney and a practitioner of Structural Integration for nearly twenty years and a board member of the International Association of Structural Integrators (IASI), I am concerned that by allowing Structural Integration to be regulated by a statute licensing massage, individuals whose education does not meet the professional standards set out by the International Association for Structural Integrators will represent themselves as performing our work. It seems that a misrepresentation about Structural Integration has arisen over the past 10 years that threatens to dilute the work and confuse the public, so I'll provide a little history first:

Structural Integration was developed in the early 1950's by Dr. Ida P. Rolf, whose Ph.D field was Biochemistry. She did not study Massage Therapy nor was she interested in it. Indeed, Massage Therapy as we know it today did not exist then. She became familiar with the Osteopathic tradition at the time and was influenced by that, as well as movement practices and yoga. Structural Integration was developed with completely different principles, perspectives and techniques than Massage Therapy currently employs. Many techniques have since evolved because of the influence of Dr. Rolf, her work and her discoveries with fascia, gravity and integration. Some of these are taught as Myofascial Release, St. John Neuromuscular, deep tissue massage, or sports massage, among others. None of these are akin to Structural Integration. IASI is dedicated to ensuring that Structural Integration does not become confused as a type of Massage Therapy and that its principles and practices remain identifiable.

IASI is a membership organization for Structural Integrators whose mission is to set and maintain professional standards and ethics codes, build community among practitioners, and safeguard the profession in the marketplace. We are currently developing a certification exam for SI

professionals that will be NCCA and ANSI approved. During the last 10 years state licensing has become increasingly problematic for US Structural Integrators because of this confusion of SI with Massage Therapy. IASI has been successful in two US states with claiming exemption from massage licensing through qualification for IASI membership. Once the certification exam is complete we will begin moving for Structural Integration licensing in more of the states.

IASI would like to work with the Massage and Bodywork associations that oversee professional standards for their regions to ensure that Structural Integration continues to be taught and practiced by qualified faculty and practitioners. Much of our job right now is to educate these associations, legislative bodies, bodywork schools and practitioners about Structural Integration so that the profession can maintain its unique place in the health care field, and that quality training is not allowed to deteriorate.

Yours in the highest standards of education,

Kathleen L. Strauch